



**STATEMENT FOR THE RECORD
BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON
ENERGY & TECHNOLOGY
ON**

SB 437 & SB 438

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Small Business Majority

Good morning Chairman Nofs and members of the Committee.

My name is Trent Varva; I'm the Michigan Outreach Manager for Small Business Majority, a national small business advocacy organization with an office in Detroit. Thank you for allowing me to share comments with you on the importance of strong clean energy policies to small businesses.

Small business owners are doing everything they can to fortify their businesses in our slowly recovering economy. They are innovative, and in order to help their businesses thrive, entrepreneurs are constantly looking for ways to cut costs and identify new business opportunities. That's why small employers want sound energy policies that transition the U.S. to a clean energy economy while helping them spend less on utility bills and more on investing in and expanding their companies.

Small Business Majority's polling of Michigan entrepreneurs found more than half of all small businesses [support](#) the EPA limiting carbon pollution from existing power plants. What's more, 59 percent of Michigan small businesses agree the expanded use of renewable energy sources such as solar and wind power can have economic benefits for small business owners by creating new business opportunities, and more than one-third strongly agree this is beneficial for small business.

Additionally, half of Michigan small business owners agree the implementation of clean air policies such as the Clean Air Act can create economic benefits for small businesses by spurring technological innovation to meet clean air standards, creating new industries and stimulating demand for services.

Michigan is already well-prepared to increase clean energy standards and move towards a clean energy economy. In fact, since 2008, Michigan has increased renewable energy production from wind, solar and geothermal sources by 100 percent, and the state set and met a goal of generating 10 percent of the state's electricity from renewable energy

sources by this year. The state has implemented more than 200 federally-supported renewable energy projects that generated enough energy to power more than 100,000 homes.

Senate Bills 437 and 438 would undo this progress by repealing the state's renewable energy standard and scaling back goals for energy efficiency standards, which would be disappointing to small businesses that have benefitted from these standards.

In fact, Small Business Majority's polling found the majority of Michigan small business owners believe strong clean energy policies help spur innovation and create economic growth. And research shows the state's renewable energy standard is already producing big benefits for the state, spurring \$2.9 billion in new clean energy investments and supporting more than 3,000 direct jobs in wind energy manufacturing.

As our polling shows, small businesses believe a clean energy economy that includes robust clean energy standards is rife with economic possibilities. Entrepreneurs understand clean energy can stimulate the economy and create new jobs now, and believe we should be investing in this area to spur growth. Despite strong small business support, efforts to set standards reducing carbon emissions have been blocked over and over. That comes at the expense of our economic future.

Small businesses report that the rising cost of doing business, including higher fuel and energy costs, is a concern. They believe forward-thinking policies that increase the use of renewable resources are good for business because they help them save money and create economic opportunities. Implementing stronger clean energy policies is a smart step forward for our small businesses, our environment and the economy.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this issue.

Sincerely,
Trent Varva, Michigan Outreach Manager
Small Business Majority